THEOLOGY

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The Problem of Divine Passibility and Prophetic Theology

PERHAPS the most outstanding feature of Hebrew prophetic theology consists in the ascription of a feeling-consciousness to God. With their characteristically naïve and quasi-mythological outlook, the Hebrew prophets emphatically attribute to God the whole gamut of human emotion, suggesting that He experiences it on an infinitely vaster scale and with an explosive energy such as harmonizes with the primitive numinous conception of the divine. Until recently it has been the fashion among Christian theologians to discount these prophetic assertions as being nothing more than a piece of crude anthropomorphism which has been happily transcended by the progress of revelation and the general evolution of human culture. The great name of St Thomas Aquinas could always be quoted in support of this somewhat contemptuous attitude. Indeed, St Thomas was supposed to have settled the question definitively by his severely logical and apparently impeccable definition of the divine being. St Thomas affirms that the very notion of passibility is inconsistent with that perfection of pure being which the term God connotes. Cogent arguments are adduced to show that, starting with the definition of God as "pure act," as the One, the Perfect, the Infinite, the Omnipotent, it is impossible that He should experience feeling, since feeling implies change, potentiality, and subjection to the effects of a cause outside the circle of His own eternally self-sufficient Being.

Despite the consummate mastery with which St Thomas has woven his philosophical theology around the affirmations of the religious consciousness reflected in the Bible, his synthesis is surely an artificial one. It represents a vain attempt to reduce to rational consistency the bold language of myth and miracle in which the biblical writers are compelled to utter their deepest apprehensions. In the interests of logical neatness, it fails to take seriously the profoundly biblical but non-philosophical concept of creation. Twentieth-century divinity has become stumblingly aware of this as it has reacted more and more sharply to the orthodox refusal to admit suffering as part of the divine experience. This reaction, however, was stimulated by the moral and spiritual *bouleversement* of the last war and was prompted by the sentimental and humanitarian motives dominant in modern theology rather than by any renascence of biblical studies or by a more serious acceptance of the postulates of biblical faith. The problem might well be approached anew in the light of modern study of the Bible and of the dialectical theology which it implies. In particular, the problem is illuminated by a study of the peculiar prophetic awareness of God.

A recent writer (Heschel, in *Das profetische Bewusstsein*) considers that the prophet's sympathy with the divine "pathos" is the very essence of the Hebrew prophetic consciousness. Not a mantic technique, not an inspired state of exalted contemplation—such are the mere accidental concomitants of the prophetic office; but the prophet's ardent self-identification with the ethically grounded divine emotion is the essential basis and *raison d'être* of the prophet's mission. The prophet sees the conduct of Israel set in the light of the divine countenance and shares with fullest intensity the passion in the heart of God which that conduct provokes. Perhaps Jeremiah and Hosea furnish the most signal illustration of this emotional solidarity which binds the prophet to his God. Jeremiah, indeed, with his tendency to lyrical outpouring has allowed us to glimpse into the secret places of his heart and to detect there the psychic upheaval which convulses his entire physical frame and deprives him of normal poise and self-control. Under the influence—one might almost say the obsession—of the "ecstatic" theory of prophetic inspiration, it has been usual to interpret these passages as giving proof of the psychopathic changes which accompany "ecstasy." May it not be also, however, that such passages indicate an overwhelming emotional tumult arising in the prophet's heart from his inspired realization of, and participation in, the emotional consciousness which he intuitively posits in God? In one passage (vi, 11*ff.*) he distinctly states that his being is overflowing with the חמת יהוה and that he is constrained to pour it out upon all and sundry. In another passage (xv, 17*ff.*) we see that his possession by the emotions of Yahwe drives him into a position of tragic aloofness from his kind. In his own personal experience there is faintly adumbrated the passion and pain of the tragedy which separates Yahwe from His people and frustrates Yahwe's loving designs. For though the prophet's self-identification with his God cuts him off from a frank and joyous participation in the feelings which animate his countrymen, he cannot be emancipated from the bond that unites him indissolubly to them. His individual life is subsumed beneath the corporate life of the nation. He is both the representative of God before the people and the representative of the people before God. Hence he feels to a degree shared by no other the poignancy of the tragic estrangement between God and His chosen people.

The tender personal intimacy of this sympathetic communion between the prophet and his emotionally determined God is indicated in images drawn from the relations between man and woman. Thus the prophet bears the name of God (xv, 16) as the woman bears the name of the man in sign of the betrothal between them. In the famous complaint of chap. xx he uses legal terms denoting the seduction (פתח) and forcing (חזק) of woman.

The prophecies of Hosea are penetrated with the conception of an ideal personal relationship between man and God (focussed and exemplified in the specially intimate relationship between the prophet and God), and it would appear that this relationship is conceived by him on the analogy of the intimacy of communion which characterizes the experience of sexual love. The conception is expressed by the

term ידע, and though the formula—to know God—is of course used to suggest clear spiritual appreciation of God's fundamental requirements, there inevitably clings to the word something of its old and common Semitic connotation of sexual union.

The symbolic action performed by Hosea in marrying a harlot draws its deep significance from this interpretation of the prophetic consciousness as a personal sharing in the emotional experience of the divine. The reason for God's command to Hosea is that the prophet must realize with all the force and intensity of individual experience the manifold fluctuations of the divine pathos which the waywardness of Israel has aroused. Only by feeling personally the agony of frustrated love can the prophet gain a true sympathetic realization of the wound which Israel's disloyalty has inflicted on the love of God. Hence his declaration of the divine Word is suffused with the divine emotions. He apprehends the truth of God's attitude towards Israel through the passionate travail which goes on in his own soul. There he catches an echo of the tragic orchestration which accompanies the divine-human drama of eternity. The anger, sorrow and pain throbbing in the heart of God are the "sweet, sad music" to which his ear is attuned. Infinite vistas are thus opened upon the unfathomably rich content of the divine experience in its relation to humanity. The very bitterness of God's disillusionment, sounding like a plaintive wail through the prophet's message, is a measure of the fiery intensity of His love. The prophet is wholly God-centred, and his solidarity with the divine pathos reaches such a point that he can even intercede for the punishment of Israel (ix, 14).

The same theocentric attitude, vividly disclosing the awful emotions of Yahwe, characterizes Isaiah's parable of the vineyard (Isa. v, 1 *ff.*). The piercing effect of the story derives from the fact that it reverberates with the thunderous tones of the divine vexation and disappointment. The prophet's consciousness is wholly absorbed by the intense personal feelings which he divines in his God. He remains unmoved by the tragic catastrophe which he announces; we trace in him no mood of sadness or regret for the *lacrimæ rerum.*

A study of the prophetic consciousness along these lines throws into relief the fact that between its theological implicates and the affirmations of the traditional classical Christian theology there arises the sharpest irreducible contradiction. We are here face to face with two religious attitudes, two modes of the knowledge of God, which it is impossible to reconcile. We would suggest that through its undue subservience to Aristotelian philosophy—represented in St Thomas—Christian theology has suffered a disastrous aberration and has conspicuously failed to work out the true intellectual implications of the Hebraic tradition of religious experience. We may briefly put forward here some considerations which will provide an intellectual explanation of the postulates of the Hebrew religious consciousness and illuminate its contrast with the Aristotelian-Thomist position. The problem rests ultimately upon the opposition between the Hebrew and Greek world-views.

At the heart of all prophetic, biblical religion lies the doctrine of the

Deus absconditus. For the Hebrew, with whom it is a self-evident proposition that no man may look on God and live, an impassable gulf separates the Creator from the creature and eternally prevents man from discovering God by his own initiative and questing. God is essentially unknowable and inaccessible to frail and mortal man, who is but dust. "Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself" (Isa. xlv, 15). This presupposition in part determines the prophetic approach to the knowledge of God. To the prophets (by contradistinction from the philosophers and mystics) God is never the Object of intellectual inquiry, nor the ineffable goal of the soul's aspiration, but the Subject of a process of self-communication which challenges man's spirit and conditions man's being and thinking. The truth which the prophet apprehends is not abstract and universal truth such as is discoverable by following out the stages in a ratiocinative process, it emerges as something integral to the context of the prophet's fellowship with the living God, and it cannot be rightly apprehended by one who stands completely outside the sphere of that dynamic experience. Had the prophets been able to think out the problem in intellectual terms they would have rejected the pretension of man's reason to analyse and define the idea of God. Their own thought of God is determined by His prevenient activity and is carried out under the pressure of the divine spirit which they cannot escape. It is "existential"—that is, it is governed by an "Ich-du" relationship in which they are conscious of a divine impact upon their souls. It is directed not to the penetration of God's eternal and unfathomable Being, but to the practical task of vehemently announcing God's emotional reactions to the conduct of Israel. The subject of the revelation which they receive is not the changeless unity of God's inner Being, but that Being as specifically related to and determined by the world's life. As prophets they are caught up into and absorbed by the successive determinations of the divine "pathos" which they bear as a burden of tragic suffering inseparable from their mission.

Their whole mentality is the polar opposite of that of the Greek philosopher. *They* work with "l'esprit de la finesse," the latter with "l'esprit de la géométrie." The one grasps truth intuitively, the other by ratiocinative speculation. Prophetic revelation arises in moments of vision or intuitional awareness, when the purport of God's Word is hammered upon the heart by divination from common sights and sounds or from everyday actions and experience.

This practical and imaginative grasp of truth, in which the whole man is engaged, harmonizes with the presuppositions of Hebrew anthropology. The Hebrew prophet can unhesitatingly ascribe a feeling-consciousness to God because he is not aware of those distinctions between body and mind, feeling and thought, which to us are vital and axiomatic. Hebrew anthropology, by its very essence, excludes the notion so characteristic of the Greek, that feeling is a baser element in man's make-up such as would cloud the clarity of pure thought. The Hebrew, always considering man as an indivisible psycho-physical unity, would have been incapable of understanding the Greek conception of man as a scale of graduated parts. In the Hebrew outlook

thought is not an independent activity existing in its own right; it is fused with feeling and sensation and is an integral part of action. The Hebrew is not interested in the exact abstract definition of an idea, but is concerned only with the living sensuous experience of contact with its concrete manifestation. These anthropological presuppositions explain why the Hebrew prophetic knowledge of God is intuitive and experimental rather than rational and discursive.

We have now to consider what are the repercussions upon philosophical theology of this prophetic awareness of the divine pathos and how this deep impassioned vision of the prophets can best be interwoven into our theological scheme. Does the postulate of a feeling-consciousness in God necessarily involve the admixture of a degrading element in our conception of the divine Being? The unfortunate associations of the term "feeling" might make it appear at first sight that this is the case. Feeling as it is experienced in the life of humanity seems often to be the very stamp of human bondage. Human desire and emotion manifest themselves as an ever-restless flux which must be controlled and directed by some unifying purpose capable of bringing interior order and harmony. It is obvious that feeling in this sense cannot be postulated of God. The divine pathos of which the prophets are aware does not imply agitation in the life of God or suggest that God is tragically caught in the network of His own creation. Some of the emotions ascribed to Him—*e.g.*, wrath and jealousy—suggest indeed that Yahwe is anthropopathic, but this conception, far from implying His dependence upon humanity, does but emphasize His numinous transcendence. The attribution of such emotions to the deity translates the primitive religious awareness of the unfathomable volcanic energies of the living God. The God of the Hebrews is overwhelmingly alive, compelling, active. He is "consuming fire." His glory manifests itself in annihilating terror and His titanic energies are poured out like "the fierce flow of desolating lava from a flaming volcano."

Divine emotion, thus understood, may be regarded as part of the religious inheritance of the prophets. In their peculiar personal vision it has another and deeper meaning. It is a means of expressing their sense that God is personal ethical will. The emotions which they ascribe to Him are to be considered as indicating a series of personal volitional attitudes. Their tacit argument consists in a lofty and refined anthropomorphism to which exception can hardly be taken, since we cannot think about God at all except in terms derived from the life of man. God is the infinite source of those moral and spiritual values the ultimate importance of which it is the prophet's mission to declare. But these values gather significance only through the interaction of personal selves, and hence the prophet is driven to conceive the relation of God to man on the analogy of the personal relation which obtains between man and his fellow-man. Thus divine pathos is the symbolic affirmation of sovereign personality in God. It is not feeling as contrasted with clear cold thought. It is no impulsive movement, as though God were subject to self-centred feeling. It suggests that there is that in God which corresponds to the rich, manifold

unity and the plenitude of imaginative and loving sympathy in an ideal human personal life. Pathos is the personal expression of the ethical holy being of God. It constitutes the ground and possibility of fellowship between man and God. It indicates that the infinite distance between man and God is overcome by the loving and prevenient activity of God Himself. It implies man's precious worth and significance to his Creator. It suggests that the human and divine personalities are not utterly disparate and discontinuous. It furnishes the basis of the most vital and intimate relationship between the eternal and the temporal, the metaphysical and the historical—a relationship which defies the logic of the philosophers. It opens up a vision of the absolute selflessness and sacrificial love of God.

The ethical law of which God is the upholder is no independent system to which God is subordinated as a mediator; it is grounded in His own perfect personality. He does not judge men's deeds impassively and with aloofness; His judgment is imbued with the personal feeling-tone of One to whom those actions are the most intimate and profound concern. The central truth of the theology implicit in this prophetic insight is just this "Erlebbarkeit" for God of human life and experience. He experiences the ultimate significance of every turn and phase of the drama of human history in the most intimate personal way and with a lucidity and fullness of comprehension which is impossible to any other because He alone knows the end from the beginning and can perceive and feel the true spiritual implications of every step in time. Since God is perfect goodness He is the one Being who is capable of feeling to the full the tragedy of the world's evil. He is the one Being whom everything concerns because He lives in and with the created universe, gathering it up into the heart of His own eternal life.

The meaning of divine pathos as the necessary co-relative of divine personality is seen when we consider it as the personal reaction of God to human sin. This "pathetic" reaction is strictly governed by a given time-situation. It is not ultimate to the being of God. It is the immediate outward aspect of the divine love as conditioned by the spiritual attitude of man. It makes room for the possibility and significance of man's repentance. It renders the moral government of the world subjective and personal. It makes possible prayer and intercession, since God can repent even of an ethically determined decision, as God was moved to relent at the supplication of Amos (Amos vii, 3, 6). The most vivid illustration of the dynamic quality of the divine pathos is seen in the prophet's glimpse of a conflict between the mercy and wrath of God. In Hosea, Yahwe is depicted as Himself shrinking from the necessity of breaking out as consuming fire. He recoils before this bitter disappointment to His love (xi, 8). His love turns itself into its apparent opposite, becoming destructive fury (xiii, 7 *ff.*), yet He pleads with Israel not to expose herself to this explosive discharge of wrath (xiii, 9).

But we cannot realize the true significance of this conflict if we attach to these emotions the meaning which they normally bear in human experience. Wrath is but an expression of divine love in face of man's sin, and means that God punishes in sorrow. It is the per-

onal co-relative of righteousness. The apparent conflict reveals suffer-ng at the heart of God. Infinite pain and passion throbbing through h- divine Being seem to be reflected in the words Lo-ammi, Lo-uhamah, which denote a tragic contradiction of Yahwe's will. God uffers from the *prima facie* frustration of His loving purpose for man, nd the dramatic tension between man and God is reflected in that uffering.

It is not possible here to enter into the vast reach of the philosophic roblems which the conception of divine pathos involves. If, how-ver, we follow out the theomorphic argument and postulate in God he perfection of personal life which is imperfectly realized by man, ve shall conclude that there is an unimaginable togetherness of God nd man, that God indwells the lives of His creatures, embracing their inite centres of consciousness with the overflowing fullness of His wn divine life and love. This immanence of God in the world means hat all the striving, toiling and suffering of humanity enters into the eart of the divine experience. The prophets introduce us to the ision of a God who experiences as no other can the sharp sting of noral evil (which is an offence against Himself, the infinitely holy), nd who is for ever involved in all its sorrow and redemptively bears ts pain. The righteousness of God is not an abstract principle such as would render retribution automatic. It pulsates with passion and prings from the inmost depths of a perfect personal love which earns with relentless persistence to make the beloved object worthy of ommunion with itself. The prophetic consciousness thus implies that he being of God consists not in a solitary and self-sufficient bliss, but n an overflowing fountain of love and joy which are poured forth pon the created world without suffering diminution and which go orth in passionate longing to gather man into the circle of divine ellowship. In the fact of God's suffering personal concern for man lies he possibility of atonement, which offers the divine solution to the uman problem of sin.

Does the prophetic vision of divine suffering really contradict the wofold thought of God's joyous blessedness in eternity and His mnipotence? If suffering in God implied inability to achieve His urpose through some resistance offered from outside, if it meant the ain and weariness of a struggle whose ultimate issue was uncertain, hen indeed it might be considered incompatible with the thought of ivine omnipotence. The divine pathos which the prophets envision , however, something very different from the idea of an unhappy nd frustrated God subject to impression from without. So far from uggesting frustration, it is the very means whereby the divine triumph s secured. For the divine pathos implies a reaction to man's sin hich, while exhibiting the evil in its true light, effects such a piritual transmutation of the situation as does away the burden of uilt and the estrangement of man from God that is its necessary onsequence. Such a spiritual transfiguration of the fact of evil could e accomplished only by the travail pangs of personal, suffering Spirit. While this theology of divine atoning love is not consciously reached y the prophets, it is the only kind of theology which is compatible

with the implicates of their peculiar awareness of God. Hosea comes nearest to its specific formulation, for his own human experience of the costliness of inexorable pardoning love taught him to realize something of the tragic tension which cleaves the heart of Yahwe. All the passion of sacrificial self-abandoning love seems to be distilled into the words: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from them" (Hos. xiv, 4).

Nor does this note of tragic poignancy dim the splendour of divine joy and blessedness. To suppose that it could do so would be to adopt an all too human and hedonistic understanding of felicity. In God the fire of love is so intense that the sacrificial bearing of man's evil is not consciously felt as pain, but is transfused with purest joy. The pain of sacrifice is lost in the joy of ultimate triumph. This joy is the ground-tone of the divine experience because God feels the time process as a whole and tastes the untainted blessedness of purpose accomplished. The divine pathos is not mere suffering, because it springs from voluntary self-limitation and is incidental to the unconstrained creative self-expression of the divine love. Through the toil and pain of sacrifice, love knows itself to be accomplishing its eternal triumph over evil, and this triumph is no contingent event of the future but an eternal act wrought in an eternal now and diffusing the divine glory through the universe.

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Books for Teachers and Pupils

Two general remarks may be made at the beginning of this survey, before the books are discussed individually.

First, scarcely any of the books received contain bibliographies. A book fails in its full purpose unless it promotes further study. In most cases something more than passing references to other books is needed, and an annotated bibliography would have been a useful addition to most of the books surveyed below.

Secondly, most of the books received (especially those on the Church and worship) are written from the Anglo-Catholic standpoint. There is no reason at all why books should not be written to explain and commend certain practices and interpretations, provided that the author's bias is clearly acknowledged. One is fully entitled to urge one's views provided that one reminds one's readers that there are other views. The proviso is specially important where the education of the young is concerned. It is misleading to describe the practices of a minority as if they were universal or even usual. The question is not whether these things (such as Children's Eucharists, the use of vestments, the hearing of confessions) are good things or bad things. The point is that they are by no means universal in the Church of England. It is therefore misleading to say that "the Church" encourages this or that practice, when the true statement would be that a certain practice is found "in some churches." Moreover, the appea

of an otherwise excellent book may be needlessly restricted by reason of a sectional bias.

The books themselves fall conveniently into four groups. N.B.—The books were published in 1942 unless otherwise stated.

(1) The Church and Worship.

Training in Worship, by Lindsay Dewar and Phyllis Dent (Rich and Cowan, 5s., 150 pp.), is No. 24 of the "Needs of Today" series. The present volume can be warmly recommended; it is full of sane wisdom and understanding and would be specially helpful to parents, teachers, and students. The first three chapters, on the nature and purpose of worship, are particularly good; and there are valuable observations on the danger of "subjectivizing" our worship (p. 34 *ff.*), on prayer as an activity of God, and on the use of the Lord's Prayer. Occasionally there is some doubtful logic, and "religious instinct" is an indiscreet term. Attention is paid to the needs of children at different ages, and there are useful hints for biblical study. There is a short bibliography.

Prayer Book Worship, by the Rev. A. P. Taylor, R.N.V.R. (National Society and S.P.C.K., Church Education Publications, 3s. 6d., x+94 pp.), is apparently meant for boys and girls from the age of about fourteen upwards, but would be most suitable for those of sixteen and over. Emphasis is laid on the need for instruction in worship, and the historical method of approach is effectively used. The Prayer Book services are clearly and interestingly explained, but the author's sacramentarian point of view restricts the appeal of the book. The Rev. F. Barrie Flint, in *From House to Home* (Church Education Publications, 1s. 6d., 76 pp.), describes Anglo-Catholic worship in a series of talks to children on furnishing a church. There are helpful observations on prayer, and the whole book is attractive of its kind, and is illustrated. But do children really like a chatty, ingratiating style of writing? *The Mount of the Eucharist*, by the Rev. Howard Porter (Church Education Publications, 1s., 48 pp.), is a series of addresses on the Children's Eucharist, originally delivered to evacuee children who had no previous experience of this service and little knowledge of worship in general.

(2) Biblical Study.

The Making of the Synoptic Gospels, by B. K. Rattey (Church Education Publications, 2s. 6d., 72 pp.), is a clear and interesting account, up to date in its scholarship, suitable for teachers and VI-Form pupils. There is a lively historical sketch of the beginnings of the Christian Church, showing the making of the gospels as the final stage of a process. Form criticism is treated briefly but sensibly. The missionary motive is given due prominence, and the function of the Church as the New Israel is appreciated. There is a good treatment of Q. But the awe and mystery of Mark is not sufficiently brought out. The last chapter is disappointing, and its title ("Jesus the Christ") is misleading, since there is no discussion of Christology. The book has neither bibliography nor index.

In the same series as the preceding book is *A Little Companion to the Psalter*, by Dr C. S. Phillips (2s. 6d., 73 pp.). This is a helpful companion to study. Problems of date and authorship are not discussed at length, but there is a useful brief introduction. The version used is that of the Prayer Book, except where this seriously misrepresents the original. The main body of the book consists of notes on the psalms themselves. The notes give, in a small compass, a great deal of helpful information, including alternative readings, and explanation of the original liturgical purpose of some psalms. Throughout, the author's aim is to help the reader to see what the psalmist himself intended the psalm to mean, rather than its pious application to Christian thought and worship. There is no index or bibliography.

The St Andrew's Lectionary of Bible Lessons, compiled by A. W. Y. and E. Y. (Baskerville Press, 1937, 8d., 221 pp.), is an admirable selection of lessons for Sundays through a two-years cycle. It is well spoken of by such authorities as Dr Scott Lidgett and Dr Micklem. Passages are shortened by judicious verse-omission in order to present a self-contained unit for each lesson of not more than about twenty verses.

(3) Doctrine.

Christian Belief, by the Dean of Wells, the Very Rev. R. H. Malden (Church Education Publications, 3s., vii+88 pp.), is a short exposition of the Apostles' Creed, and is based on thirty years' experience in teaching. The book would suit V- and VI-Form pupils, but is apparently meant for younger readers as well. It would be a useful guide for teachers. The style is clear and interesting, but the book is too brief for adequate treatment to be possible of such matters as the divinity and humanity of Christ, or the Atonement, and there is no bibliography. The author's attitude is large-minded and essentially reasonable, and there are wise words about difficult problems such as the bodily resurrection and the virgin birth. The Creeds are approached from a historical point of view, and the essentially historical character of Christianity is emphasized. The treatment of divine omnipotence and evil is unsatisfactory, since the importance of freedom, as the consequence of creation and the source of evil, is not brought out.

Understand your Faith, by Antony Snell (Mowbray, 4s., 155 pp.), is meant for boys and girls of fourteen years of age and upwards and is planned in the form of answers to seventy-two questions. The first two chapters illustrate the perils of attempting simplified apologetics; the argument for the existence of God is not at all convincing, and the argument from design is used in its old form. It would have been better to start historically rather than speculatively, and the love of God would have been a better key to the meaning of creation. The point of view is markedly Anglo-Catholic. A reference to purgatory is accompanied by the almost meaningless remark that ". . . nearly all Christians who stick to traditional belief believe in something of this kind." The statement on p. 45 that "most Christians . . . make . . . confession before a priest," though perhaps statistically true, seems a little misleading in a book in which an Anglican standpoint is

assumed. The book, however, contains some good things, such as the observation that non-worshipping human beings are failing to do the chief thing that God meant man to do. There is no bibliography.

The Victory of Faith, by Dr J. O. Nash (Church Education Publications, 2s. 6d., xxii+244 pp.), was first published in 1937, and is now reprinted. The author was at one time headmaster of St John's College, Johannesburg, and taught in two other South African schools before that. The book, which is meant to be studied, with the teacher's help, as a class book for boys beyond confirmation stage, consists of thirty-seven short chapters (which read like good sermons or addresses) spread over the whole field of Christian doctrine and Anglican worship. The historical approach (*e.g.*, on the subject of sacrifice) is interestingly and effectively used, and there is much apt and illuminating literary allusion. Doctrine is treated dogmatically and rather naïvely; there is little serious attempt to reckon with intellectual difficulties. The South African setting is assumed and made use of (*e.g.*, in reference to primitive man), but this enhances rather than restricts the general appeal of the book.

The S.P.C.K. has published seven pamphlets by various authors under the general title of "Youth Asks Questions" (3d. each, about 20-30 pp.). The best of these is Dr Grensted's *What is Man?*, which is a survey of psychology and values. It is not profound but would be helpful; the style is rather irritatingly chatty. *Why Does God Allow War?* (John Drewett) is sound, though the argument is over-simplified in places; the point is well made that liberal Christianity has sentimentalized God. The second part of *Could God Become Flesh?* (Anon.), which deals with the Fourth Gospel's account of the Incarnation, is good, but there is some very doubtful argument in the earlier part about the grounds of belief in God. The other booklets in this series are, *Are We Really Free?* (T. G. Edwards), *Can We Now Believe?* (J. R. Lumb), *Ought We All To Be Equal?* (Anon.), and *Do Miracles Happen?* (Henry Balmforth).

4) Religious Instruction.

The Holy Spirit and the Kingdom, edited by J. P. Hodges and R. E. Parker (National Society and S.P.C.K., Anglican Evangelical Group Movement Publications, 2s., viii+200 pp.), is Vol. III of a series entitled "Discipleship" of which the other two volumes are *The Master and the Disciple* and *The King and the Kingdom*. The book consists of lesson-notes for fifty-two lessons for children of eleven *plus*, in Sunday school. It is assumed that preparation lessons will be taken with the teachers. The main theme throughout is the biographical illustration of the work of the Holy Spirit. The lives chosen include biblical characters and range through the history of the Church to the present day. Of their kind, these lesson-notes are very well done, and sufficient attention is paid to the need for expression work by the children. It is questionable whether teaching ought to be based on ready-made lesson-notes; but this is no doubt the lesser of two evils so long as Sunday-school teaching has to be done by untrained and juvenile

teachers. Anyhow, the book contains much material that would be useful to any teacher. There is no bibliography, but books are recommended *passim.*

In *The First Three Years* (Mowbray, 1s. 6d., 59 pp.) the Rector of Chislehurst, the Rev. R. Lumb, publishes four talks to parents, which were originally given in response to requests. The conditions and nature of early religious education are discussed in a clear, practical, and very sensible way. The author stresses the supreme importance of the home and the attitude of parents, quoting Pestalozzi's remark that "the home is the basis of the education of humanity." The solemn responsibility of the parents is underlined by the reminder that children's religion begins as a sharing in the parents' religion. There is also valuable emphasis on the importance of activity—doing things—in children's religion. Mr Lumb's teaching is both good education and good religion. The first talk (What is Religion? . . ., etc.) is the least adequate.

Dr Ikin, formerly Director of Education for Blackpool, has written a useful pamphlet entitled *Christian Education—The Archbishops' "Call to Action": What are the Next Steps?* (National Society and S.P.C.K., 6d., 24 pp.). He summarizes the Five Points and other recent statements of policy. He then makes some recommendations for immediate further action and shows what legislation would be required to implement them.

A Supplementary Instruction (National Society and S.P.C.K., 1939, 6d., 15 pp.) is a catechism in modernized language issued for experimental use in the Province of York. The Archbishop explains that the Instruction has as yet no formal authority. Much careful thought has been given to the preparation of this catechism by the York Provincial Board for Work among Young People, and the result is interesting and should be of great practical value. Emphasis is laid on the principle that words should not be learnt before the ideas which they express are understood.

Bible Plays for Little Players, by A. S. Westley (National Society and S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d., 73 pp.), is intended for infants and juniors. There are eleven plays, mostly illustrating biblical stories and parables, and including two Christmas plays and a pageant of harvest thanksgiving. The aim is to familiarize children with the stories rather than to secure a high standard of dramatic presentation. The plays are pleasing, and all are short enough to be performed within the space of about fifteen minutes to half an hour.

An important series of five booklets has been issued by Church Education Publications with the general title "Growing Up in the Church" (n.p., 10-40 pp. each). Miss Phyllis Dent's *The Child's Initiation into the Life and Worship of the Church* would be very useful to parents and teachers, and especially to clergy. It contains accounts of various actual experiments, including an excellent scheme of training in church membership and some interesting devices such as a Pageant of Evensong. Miss Doris H. Dent's *Using the Bible* has very good

advice on the devotional reading of the Bible, and is helpful on the use of the Bible with young children; there are incidental references to other books. In *Home Religious Training*, Miss Janet Grierson describes a most interesting and important experiment in the Diocese of Durham, conducted by a sub-committee of the Durham Mothers' Union Council. The enterprise began as an attempt to cope with the deplorable state of religious ignorance revealed by evacuation. Religious conditions among children in the diocese have been studied with special reference to their home training. It is not possible in a brief note to deal adequately with this report on the work. One conclusion reached is that complete neglect is quite common in homes where children have been baptized and the parents reckon themselves church members. The booklet contains much that will be of help to parents, and there is a useful bibliography. The other two booklets in this series are *Education Weeks*, by Eleanor Martin, and *Learning the Faith*, an account of experiments compiled by Doris H. Dent, which forms a companion volume to *The Child's Initiation*.

M. V. C. Jeffreys.

Durham.

Comment on Literary Periodicals

The "Eclipse of the Highbrow" bogy rears its head again in the January-February and March-April numbers of *Partisan Review*.[1] The cause of this is Mr Van Wyck Brooks' attack on modern literature in his lecture "Primary Education and Coterie Literature," for which he has been severely criticized in letters in the aforementioned *Partisan Review*. The substance of a leader in *The Times* in the early part of 1941 and that of Mr Brooks' lecture are practically the same—a condemnation of modern literature and art as being esoteric and obscurantist. Both these criticisms are muddled and superficial. The question at issue is, as John Crowe Ransom states in his letter, a much deeper one. "What Mr Brooks should indict," he says, "is not the writers but the age which bore them." Mr Eliot's implication is the same. It is not enough to condemn. What we ought to be asking is: *why* is it (modern art) what it is? When that question is asked and answered it will be seen that modern art and literature are in part a protest against the cultural and spiritual anarchy of our day. It is also a protest against any ideological regimentation, whether of the Fascist, Communist or "democratic" variety. The lack of sympathy on the part of *The Times* leader and Mr Brooks and those who condemn the moderns outright reveals a dangerous complacency concerning cultural and social decay. Whatever the faults of the moderns may be they are at least aware that something is radically wrong with Western civilization, and they are trying to do something about it. Perhaps this is more than could be said for Mr Brooks and those who share his views. A more sympathetic approach to this question is the

[1] 45, Astor Place, New York. 1 dollar 50 cents yearly.

Blackfriars[1] (December) number on "The Obscure Poet," which does attempt to discuss Mr Eliot's supposed "obscurity," though the implication that modern readers want a "personal union" with the poet rather than with the poetry seems to be somewhat peculiar.

More valuable for the understanding or appreciation of Mr Eliot than *Blackfriars* is the Orwell-Raine "Points of View" article in *Poetry* (*London*),[2] which centres round the trilogy *Burnt Norton*, *East Coker*, and *The Dry Salvages*. Mr Orwell is puzzled. He can't understand what these three poems are about. He finds them depressing, and is unable to discover what all this mumbling about prayer, repentance, and despair has to do with poetry. Quite so. Miss Raine explains the causes; Mr Orwell is still in the Waste Land stage, living according to the false security provided by "the (scientific) values that were solid before Einstein." Poetry "is an approach to the world" and Mr Eliot is concerned with a "reassessment of life"—not in the political sense (as perhaps Mr Orwell would wish it to be) but in terms of the nature and destiny of Man. It is interesting to note that *East Coker*, *The Dry Salvages*, and *Little Gidding* have been written during the war. They are not "war" poems, but are concerned with man and his relationship to time and eternity. Before the war finishes Mr Orwell may begin to see the significance of this theme—and the need for prayer, repentance and despair.

The November *Horizon*[3] is not inspiring. It contains two good pieces. One is Henry Miller's article on the effects of American industrialization on society in general and on agriculture. The other is a longish article by Robert Melville on the technique of Picasso.

The September *Townsman*[4] (now *The Scythe*) continues to keep up our interest in agriculture. Richard March writes on the *De Monarchia* and throws out the suggestion that Dante's problem, the cultural and spiritual reintegration of Western Europe under a resuscitated Empire, is not without interest for us. We cannot yet tell what the war will produce, but there may emerge one State or nation with a sufficient degree of cultural creativeness to reintegrate the political, cultural, and social life of the twentieth century. The need for such a reintegration or synthesis between Russia and the West is urged in the first number of "The Changing World Series" (*Russia and the West*[5]—contributors to this number include Christopher Dawson, Charles Williams, Nicholas Zernov and others). Time alone will prove whether this is possible.

H. Theodore Smith, S.S.M.

Liverpool.

[1] Blackwell, Oxford. 1s. monthly. [2] Craven House, Kingsway, W.C.2. 1s. 6d. [3] 6, Selwyn House, W.C.1. 1s. 6d. monthly. [4] West Mill, Morwenstow, N. Cornwall. 2s. quarterly. [5] 23, Lower Belgrave Street, S.W.1. 6d.

CORRESPONDENCE

COMMONWEALTH ORDINATIONS

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

As a postscript to the letter of Mr Kirkpatrick in your December issue, quoting the well-known letter from Bishop Robert Skinner concerning his services to the Church under the Commonwealth, I may be interesting to notice the motive which prompted him to recite his meritorious services to Bishop Sheldon. Skinner feared that the ancient bishops were not removed because they did not . . . relieve their mother, the Church, when she stood most in need." That is, he feared lest he was being passed over in the translations of bishops after the happy Restoration because his services were not known to the authorities in Church and State; and Oxford was one of the poorest sees. It seems that "removed" must be understood to mean "translated"; and it is happy to remember, therefore, that Skinner was translated in 1663 to the lucrative see of Worcester.

In the same volume of the Tanner MSS in Bodley (48, *fol.* 23) there is a letter to Sheldon from Bishop John Warner of Rochester likewise setting out his meritorious services to the cause of Crown and Church. The letter is too long to quote *in extenso*; but the bishop divides his sufferings and services under no fewer than seventeen heads! Beginning with a Passiontide sermon which he preached before the king at Whitehall "about the second year of the late king Charles I of ever-blessed memory," he related all his fortunes since that time. His sermon, from the text "When they saw him, they said among themselves: This is the heir, come let us kill him and seize on his inheritance" (Matt. xxi, 28), was "a full and clear prophecy of that most excellent king and glorious martyr's death," and brought the preacher (as he firmly believed) in danger of being hanged at Whitehall gate! When the Bishops' wars broke out, Warner "and but one bishop more were commanded out of the south to wait on the king at his council at York, 1640," and he defended the royal cause in the Parliament of that year. A long list of his financial benefactions, and of the forced levies made on him during the Interregnum, follows, together with evidences of the persecutions suffered. "They had cast me into prison had I not escaped to Oxon in disguise and after was forced to live in Wales three years." "When I refused to take their wicked oath and engagements, I and no bishop else was three times banished from the place of my abode." "I and no bishop else was forced to pay the tenth part of my estate, real and personal." His ecclesiastical services did not include ordinations; but "in these latter times whether I lived in my own house or sojourned I read the prayers of the church both morning and evening, preacht weekly, administered sacrament monthly, confirmed publicly and privately in orthodox congregations." Warner firmly believed that "there is not a clergyman living who hath done or suffered (put them both together) more for

the king, the church and the poor clergy." And, like Skinner, he wrote to Sheldon to remind him "that though I am utterly forgotten in all, yet that I have not forgot in any kind to discharge the part of a true and loyal subject to my sovereign lord, nor of a dutiful son to my holy mother the church." Unfortunately Warner reaped no earthly reward, for he died without translation, in the poor see of Rochester, in October, 1666.

I am,
Yours, etc.,
NORMAN SYKES.

OXFORD.
December 5, 1942.

KING ALFONSO[1]

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

Sir,

It is no doubt natural for the Rev. D. R. Davies, whose only journey to Spain was made as guest of "the Reds," to consider my view of Spain, founded on leading Spanish historians, including the guidance of the President of the Spanish Academy of History, added to twenty-five years' knowledge of the country, as shallow. Schooled in Communism, he naturally sees murderers, not in the gangs who killed 16,000 priests and nuns and 300,000 civilians, because these were unpunished by his Spanish hosts, but in "the Church"; but he should not attribute to me, and then describe as howlers, statements which are his own. Neither on p. 80 nor on any other page do I say that the "Russian nihilists were Marxian," nor did I say that nihilists in Russia "organized workmen according to the theories of Marx and Engels,' but that, as the context shows, the nihilist agencies in Spain did this. I never said that Marx organized nihilists. If there were any doubt as to my meaning, it is made clear in the next paragraph, where I explain that a kindred impulse passed from one revolutionary society to another, and that the spirit of Bakunin set them "seething with impulses of violence and anarchy." My statements were carefully documented by authorities whom Mr Davies prefers to ignore, since he cannot confute. I do *not* show that the King was an ignoramus. If a man's interests were in history, politics, the services and sport, he is not an ignoramus. All I said was that they were "not in literature.' Finally, Professor Allison Peers shows in *Spain, the Church and the Order* that to talk of a reactionary Church exploiting the masses is utterly false.

ROBERT SENCOURT.

December 24, 1942.

The Rev. D. R. Davies writes as follows:

Since space is so limited, I must "bovrilize" my reply. And first, on points of fact.

Mr Sencourt denies that he said that Russian Nihilists were Marxists. Well, here are his words. "During the last decades of the nineteenth

[1] See THEOLOGY, December, 1942, p. 259*f*.

entury they (the Spanish Black Hand) were hugely strengthened by ne Russian nihilists, *who organized workmen according to the theories of Marx and Engels . . .*" (p. 80). If Marx and Engels were the guides of ne Russian Nihilists, then, surely, they were Marxist. I leave it, Sir, o your readers to decide whether, on that statement, I have misepresented Mr Sencourt.

This statement is a shocking error in a writer professing to give an ccount of European social forces, as they operated in one particular ountry, Spain. Russian Nihilists did not "organize" workmen. They ere individual terrorists. The Russian Marxists opposed individual errorism tooth and nail. They were the greatest enemies of the Nihilists. n this point, Mr Sencourt has stated the exact opposite of the truth. t is there in his book, page 80.

With regard to the other points raised by Mr Sencourt, let me say riefly that what I regarded as "shallow" in Mr Sencourt was not his nowledge of Spain, but his interpretation and analysis of the facts. And I still think so—even more so now. He is also wrong in saying hat my only visit to Spain was as a guest of "the Reds." My first visit o Spain was in 1911.

We shall have to agree to differ whether Alfonso was an ignoramus. I hink that a king who ignored all the leading figures of literature and hilosophy is fitly described as an ignoramus.

Professor Allison Peers is a great authority on Spain, but not so reat as to abolish facts. The terrible poverty of the Spanish easantry, the cultural backwardness of the masses, the bitter antilericalism of the proletariat and the belated feudalism of the social tructure are evidence, at least, of an exploiting ecclesiastical hierarchy —a judgment shared by such good Roman Catholics as Maritain and Bernanos. The conclusion to which I have come is that, in the Spanish onflict, both sides were evil, but that of the two, the Republicans (the 'Reds" as Mr Sencourt would call them) were the lesser evil.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE WORLD CHURCH: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE YOUNGER CHURCHES. By Godfrey E. Phillips. Lutterworth Press. 10s.

This very interesting study "started from the fact that many missionaries and many national leaders are perplexed about the place they ought to give to the Old Testament; some of them, consequently, use it very little, and some are conscious of using it wrongly. What is the real function of this larger part of the Bible in the twentieth century as the religion of Christ spreads through Africa and the East?" (p. 1). Professor Phillips, with the assistance of certain helpers, sets out to state the question clearly, as it has thrust itself upon missionaries working in Africa, India and China, and to help such missionaries to find their way towards an answer. He divides his

book into four parts. In Part I he collects evidence from missionaries on active service concerning the present use of the Old Testament in Africa, India and China; in Part II he deals with the Old Testament itself in two chapters entitled "The Pagan Religious Background of the Old Testament" and "What Happened to the Jews and to Them Alone"; in Part III he considers the use made of the Old Testament in the Gospels, in the Early Church, in the Middle Ages, in the post-Reformation churches, and in the present day; in Part IV he gives "Constructive Conclusions" under the four headings: (i) affecting all areas, (ii) affecting primitive peoples, (iii) affecting India, (iv) affecting China; finally, an appendix on "The Old Testament and Islam," a postscript addressed to fellow-missionaries, a short bibliography, and an index in two parts.

Professor Phillips has spent many years in India and knows from experience how hard it is to make people who have no historical sense see the Old Testament as the record of a progress towards fuller knowledge and clearer light, but he will have nothing to do with proposals to drop the Old Testament altogether from missionary instruction, and will only look favourably upon the use of a "shortened or rearranged Old Testament" if it is fully understood that "sooner or later the younger churches must have the whole" (p. 107). For the Old Testament "is not primarily a textbook of ethics, but the record of what God did to get Himself a chosen people; it is then the first part of the story of the Church" (p. 157). Readers who know their Bible will agree with Professor Phillips that the New Testament cannot be fully understood without knowledge of the Old Testament. Readers who have specialist's knowledge of the Old Testament will notice that, like Sir Edwyn Hoskyns and Father Hebert (whose books he recommends in the strongest terms), Professor Phillips sometimes sees connexions between the Old Testament and the New which do not really exist (*e.g.*, p. 57). All readers will be grateful for a most instructive book.

Two additions might well be made to the short bibliography: "The Prophets and the Rise of Judaism," by A. Lods (E.T., 1937), and a review of Father Hebert's "The Throne of David," which appeared in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. XLIII. Something has gone wrong with the biblical references in the last line of p. 80, and the reference to Harnack's *Marcion* at the foot of p. 76 should be either 1st edition, pp. 248*f.*, *or* 2nd edition, pp. 217*f.*

F. S. Marsh.

Cambridge.

Redemption and Revelation in the Actuality of History. By H. Wheeler Robinson. Nisbet: The Library of Constructive Theology. 12s. 6d.

In this book Dr Wheeler Robinson sets out to expound and defend, by an "approach through the axioms of a philosophy of history," the following thesis: "The revelation made by the Gospel is that of a redemption; the redemption does not consist simply in a revelation

hich influences men to lead a new life; the revelation produces this ubjective) change of attitude and conduct because it reveals an bjective) redemption which God has independently wrought in hrist, which is completed in the actual transformation taking place Christian lives" (pp. xi, x). The importance of such an exposition obvious, and Dr Robinson's name is sufficient guarantee of the arning with which it has been performed; nevertheless, for the esent reviewer at least, the impression produced by the book as a hole is that it is satisfactory neither as an exposition of the traditional aith of Christendom nor as an apologetic to the contemporary world. For, basing itself as it does, in common with the rest of the series of hich it is a member, upon "religious experience" as its ultimate nction, the book manifests a curious circularity in its argument. e are, for example, told that "the authority of the Church must itself pend on the prior recognition of that authority by its members" . xxxix), though how that authority can be recognized before it has me into existence is not clear. Again, there is a reluctance to take cripture really seriously, which results at times in a *de-haut-en-bas* titude both to it and even to the Redeemer Himself. The story of e Gadarene swine has not "a vital place in the testimony" (p. 83); he Christian would claim that the person of Christ holds its unique sition in his faith and worship because this highest category of his perience provides the highest conception of God which he can rm" (p. 107); and so on. The distinct personality of the Holy Spirit doubtfully apparent (p. 290 *ff.*), and the Christological discussion Chapter XI is extremely inconclusive. Nor is there any adequate cognition of the importance of the biblical revival of recent years. hat revival has indeed in some of its manifestations been irrational nd even hysterical, but its truth and error will not be sifted by method which takes the supernatural character of the Word of od with as little seriousness as it is taken in this book. And Dr obinson raises many burning philosophical questions which he dis-isses in an amazingly casual way; the discussion of the symbolism language, for instance, makes only a passing reference to the doctrine analogy which has in recent years been brought back into great ominence by such writers as the Abbé Penido.

It is painful to have to write in these terms of a book by a scholar Dr Robinson's eminence, but it is impossible to conceal the sense disappointment which is left by a work which raises so many great sues and then, in spite of its scholarship, succeeds so little in answer-g them in a way that might be relevant to either the philosophical nd theological thought of the present day or the concerns of the rdinary man. "The doctrines of the Fall and of Original Sin," we e blandly told, "do not take any great place in modern theology" . 65). Neither the doctrine of the Mystical Body nor that of human ciety—doctrines to which the fact of redemption is surely relevant—ceives any exposition. And while certain sections of the book are uminating, notably that on the Hebrew conception of human ature, it is sadly lacking in unity as a whole.

We may indeed well wonder whether this series has not, in the

fifteen years or so since its inception, lost its *raison d'être*. The Genera Introduction still tells us that "the present spiritual crisis is essentially a questioning of authority if not a revolt against it," and invoke Bradley, Mazzini and Whitehead in justification of its appeal t "religious experience" as "the starting-point of theological recon struction," as if neither Hitler nor Barth had yet been heard of. I not, in any case, the title misleading? "Constructive theology" shoul presumably mean a theology which, taking itself for granted, assist in the construction of other realms of human thought or action whereas, as the General Introduction indicates, this is a theology whic is itself in process of being reconstructed. Whether this series has don very much to "bridge the gulf which too often separates the pulpi from the pew" is in any case open to doubt; but there can be no doub whatever that the main task for a constructive theology to-day is t bridge that even wider and more dangerous gulf which separates th altar from the factory, the farm, and the bourse.

E. L. Mascall.

Lincoln.

Sylfeini'r Ffydd Ddoe a Heddiw.: Foundations of the Faith Yesterday and To-day. S.C.M. Press. 3s.

This collection of essays is published for the benefit of student seeking to understand the Christian Faith in the light of moder theological study. It is divided into two parts, but this division is no a happy one, as it seems to set the Bible, which is treated unde "Yesterday," over against such subjects as "The Philosophy o Religion" or "Christian Reunion," treated under "To-day," as i they were of equal importance. This may seem a trivial criticism, bu is not really one if the background and outlook of the type of reade for whom the book is primarily intended are borne in mind. Wha is more, the second part of the book is a good deal better than th first, which is slight and rather old-fashioned. It reveals in the Nev Testament sections little sign of the authors having grasped th significance of Hoskyns or of Dodd, neither of whom finds a plac amongst authors suggested for the study of the Gospels. In the book suggested for the Fourth Gospel the 1941 edition of R. H. Strachan' work should be specified. In the Old Testament essays no understand ing of the vital approach indicated by Fr Hebert in *The Throne o David* is shown, and this book is not suggested for study, nor is Welch' clear and important little book *Prophet und Priest in Old Israel*.

The best essay is undoubtedly that of Professor Daniel in Part II dealing vigorously and vividly with the significance of continenta scholarship, and, in particular, brilliantly contrasting the theologica outlook of Kierkegaard with that of the "Jesus of History" school an of writers like the late Dr Miall Edwards, who has had considerabl influence in Welsh theological circles.

A notable omission is that of any reference to Liturgy amongst th Foundations of the Faith, nor does there seem to be any realizatio of the place of worship in the life of the Church. With one exception all the contributors are Free Churchmen, and in Wales these ar

ill too closely wedded to the old "liberal" theology to have come to ips with the movement of modern religious thought on this subject. or writers such as Professor Daniel and Dr Islwyn Davies, then, ere is a great opportunity.

My colleague, the Rev. E. M. Roberts, who fills up the regrettable cunæ in my knowledge of the Welsh tongue, deplores the appearance such mongrel words as *rialiti*, *histeria*, *emosiwn*, and even *sialens* English, *challenge*), when there is ready to hand a perfectly good Welsh word such as *her*.

GLYN SIMON.

LLANDAFF.

THE RIGHT TO LIVE. By Max Plowman. Andrew Dakers. 7s. 6d.

This book is a statement of faith—the faith of a pacifist, socialist, gricultural, community movement of which the patron prophets em to be chiefly William Blake, D. H. Lawrence, Dick Sheppard, ae lamented author of this book, and Mr John Middleton Murry, who troduces it. It is a faith which challenges the existing social and ligious order *in toto*, the Dissent of our day. It is a movement of ind and spirit which neither religion nor sociology will be wise to nore, one of the most significant movements of our time.

This faith begins with a drastic denial which dates from the dis-lusionment of the last war. It is powerfully and movingly stated in ae essay which gives the title to the book and was written (as, possibly, last testament) on leave from the trenches in 1917. That this should e easily the outstanding essay in the book, the later portions of which ate from the present war, suggests that this movement has, as yet, ound neither its soul nor a clear and convincing creed.

For this faith the way of life of our capitalist, industrialized, mechan-ed, God-less age is, in Mr Murry's phrase, a "politics of perdition." or its pseudo-Christianity "the way of the Cross has become a prim-ose path trimmed with vestments" where "fat hirelings of religion" nd a "shilly-shally church." The "vast inhuman machine" of odern life is in "fierce opposition to the precepts of Christ"; "*life self* stands confronted by pure mechanism. Science is its 'dictator,' ut science is essentially without a sense of values," and is therefore blind guide. From politics no healing can conceivably come. Dogma" is the devil; it is "powerless to teach the truth." (Mr T. S. liot is said to "rejoice in dogma" and to lack "the grace of intellectual harity," and is therefore condemned in a passage the publication of hich seems a pity.)

For this school of thought and life pacifism is a repudiation of the ntire capitalist order, which is conceived as militarist both in peace nd war. Under it we are "conscripts to Industrialism" and our life s based, not upon love, its true foundation, but upon competition and onflict. This is the "Vanity Fair" from which the Christian pacifist ust flee, fingers in ears. For "who can assault the entrenched hosts f avarice?"

It is a logical and realistic escapism according to which the faithful ust "come out from among them" and live, in dissident communi-

ties, by the counter-laws of love, co-operation and community. It i a Gordian cutting of our knot, a constructive despair of our conditio in the modern world which is not confined to pacifists. To some i will seem that it is only when this counsel of despair is justified and pu into practice that pacifism is itself justified. In this courageous form it may cause dissent: it can hardly cause contempt. It is a heroi pacifism.

But this is not only a revolt against modern society: it is also a revol against modern Christianity; it evidently emanates from a deep aversion from traditional religious forms and terms, which is, again not confined to pacifists, for which "the very word religion . . . i expressive of nausea." It revolts from "dogma"; it proposes a ver dogmatic theology of its own. It revolts from orthodox Christianity it proposes a "new simplicity of faith," a purified neo-Christianit of its own.

It is a religion which "begins in subjective experience," "in whicl the individual himself accepts the burden of the incarnation of nev values," and "the spring and source of all religion" is Blake's Imagina tion. This Imagination is "consciousness in activity"; it is "the mean by which man is transformed into the divine image," by whicl "natural instinct is sublimated and put in its place of delightfu service to an appreciative master." It is the "energy of the soul," "seeing with the eye of God." It is equated with "what should neve be doubted—an intuition." This faith aims, with D. H. Lawrence, a "reintegration through emotional rebirth," and so at a "widely dis tributed happiness," the "gift of harmony." It is a "new movement" of which Lawrence was the prophet and in which he took "the firs essential steps." Some may feel that Lawrence also took the last ste of a descent to fertility-faith and phallicism.

Thus, for this form of faith, Imagination takes her seat upon th throne which Reason resigns. This may be a "new theology" or cathartic heresy; it is certainly dogmatic. Is it Christianity?

OXFORD. M. CHANING-PEARCE.

HUMILIATION WITH HONOUR. By Vera Brittain. Andrew Dakers 3s. 6d.

RABBONI. By Susan Miles. Andrew Dakers. 8s. 6d.

In *Humiliation with Honour* Miss Vera Brittain presents the case fo Christian pacifism. She writes ably and nearly always with dignity and restraint, though there are occasional lapses; it is, for example begging more than one question to suggest that those who believe th present war justifiable necessarily believe "that Christian civilizatio could be defended by cruelty, falsehood, vengeance, and othe methods which Christ Himself repudiated" (p. 30). Miss Brittai would object to such propagandist methods if used by the other side The pacifist position is not argued: it is said to rest on a convictio antecedent to logic; and although the fact of original sin is recog nized Miss Brittain still seems to think that a liberal and internationa

ngdom of Heaven may come on earth through the triumph of spiritual authority" now resident in the pacifist minority. This eological and sociological inadequacy, however, is accompanied mature reflection upon the spiritual purgation which an experience humiliation may bring to the convinced and consistent pacifist. Miss Brittain, war necessarily implies vengeance and retribution; d it can never resolve our difficulties, since it merely treats symptoms stead of reaching down to the fundamental causes of international order. But it is surely possible to admit our own partial responsiility for Hitlerism, and yet to believe that the symptom must be eated, the abscess reduced, before a necessary major operation upon e European body can take place. Miss Brittain never considers the sition of those Christians who believe in the principles of the "just ar." There is a good deal, however, in her indictment of allied ethods of warfare with which such Christians will concur as fully as eir pacifist brethren. She points out the tricks of language by which opaganda smothers our sympathy for the human individuals inlved in fighting and suffering (such hideous euphemisms as "mopng up," "a good bag"); our substitution of "morale" for morality; e degrading worship of "toughness." Anyone concerned for nristian culture must share her dismay at the rapid declension of andards and ideals in the past three years. She denounces the ethods of blockade and wholesale bombing, and on the latter bject issues a sharp challenge to the Church:

"In 1940 a group of pacifist clergy went on a deputation to the rchbishops of Canterbury and York. Part of their purpose was to quire at what point the Church would rather see the war lost than on by methods inconsistent with Christianity. The Archbishops plied that this point would be reached if the bombing of open towns ere undertaken, not as a reprisal, but as part of our national olicy . . ."

Ample quotation shows that this point has been reached, but still thing has been said or done by the Archbishops. Indeed, it is a ty that Miss Brittain's book had not been a little delayed, to enable r to quote from the Archbishop of York's recent speech in the Lords: . . I would urge them [*i.e.*, the Government] to state repeatedly nd solemnly that when the hour of deliverance comes retribution ill be dealt out, not only on the cold-blooded and cowardly brutes ho order these massacres [*i.e.*, in Poland], but also on the thousands underlings who appear to be joyfully and gladly carrying out these uelties."

In the name of what God is such a visitation demanded? Miss ittain's book should be read in quite high places, since, however istaken in some of its assumptions, it does contain a necessary reinder of fundamental Christian teaching which the official mind of e Church of England seems in danger of forgetting.

Miss Susan Miles' *Rabboni* is a novel, unusual and interesting, but t entirely successful. Its theme is the ultimate triumph of life over ath, of God the Word, in nature and in the Incarnation and the hurch, over the disruptive forces of secular society. The mildly

Joycean manipulation of words hardly justifies itself; it is not sufficiently consistent, and there is often a clash in association between traditional literary forms and colloquialism. Moreover, it is dangerous for any but the most orderly and integrated mind to shift the stress of attention from the rational to the infra-rational level. Miss Miles is humourless, and her tone frequently borders on hysteria, which is not just the hysteria of the characters:

"She had been craving for a touch: for a touch to bring coolth. And the touch brought coolth. The drip was as from a finger unharmed, God-sent through Lazarus, when a scorched soul was tormented in Hell, and so prayed. Her lips were eased: they were eased from the thirst that cracks to the thirst ready for quenching—for quenching independent of coolth."

This is needlessly irritating: its silly mannerisms withdraw the reader's attention from valuable material which might have had more balanced expression. Miss Miles is good at sensory detail: she describes well a rural baking-day or a sculptress at work; but her respect for tradition has not yet manifested itself in her prose.

CARDIFF. S. L. BETHELL.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(*Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.*)

ALLEN AND UNWIN: C. H. Waddington, *Science and Ethics* (7s. 6d.).

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